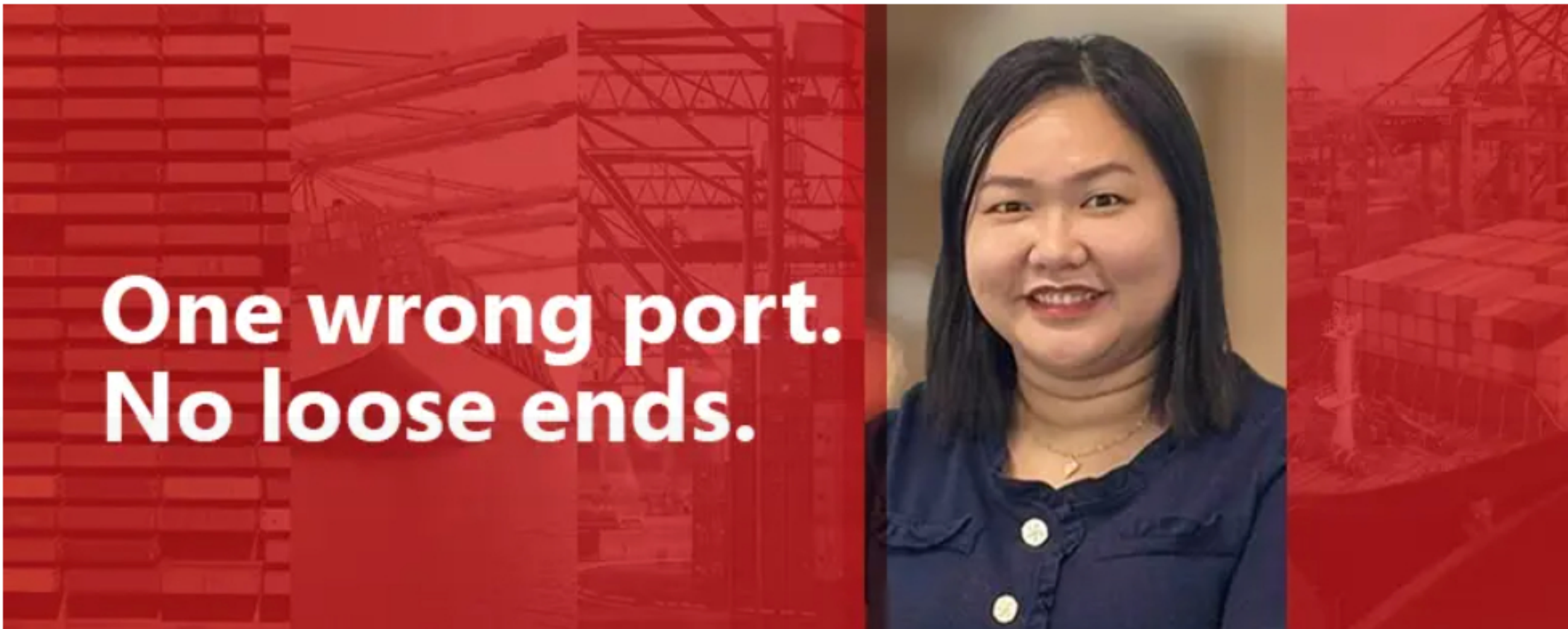


Case

Preventing a wrong turn from becoming the customer’s problem

27 Jul, 2026 | Share 



A full container meant for Malaysia arrived in Singapore by mistake. The cargo had already taken a wrong turn, so the next priority was to stop the issue from growing.

For the customer, the risk was not only further delay. It was additional charges, storage costs, permit questions, and more complexity landing on their desk.

In ocean freight, the journey may take weeks. But when something goes off course, the window to act can be short.

Lay Chean, Customer Service Executive in Ocean Freight, helped bring the shipment back under control. We spoke with her to get a closer look at how close follow-up, clear communication, and knowing which detail to act on first helped move the container in the right direction again.

Why good communication is not always more communication

For Lay Chean, good communication does not mean passing every detail on to the customer.

Sometimes, it means solving what can be solved before it becomes a customer worry. Other times, it means being transparent when something affects the customer’s options, costs, or timing.

‘If something is out of our control, such as a vessel change, I inform the customer immediately,’ Lay says. ‘If it is a smaller issue I can solve quickly, I try to fix it first and then update them.’

That balance matters.

Customers do not need every internal follow-up. They need to know what affects them, what is being done, and what happens next.

In this case, that meant acting before storage time and extra charges continued to build.



Stopping extra costs before they start building

Several things had to be checked before the container could move onwards to Malaysia.

Permit requirements had to be reviewed. Tax handling had to be clarified. Cross-border transport from Singapore to Malaysia had to be arranged. And the empty container had to be returned to Singapore afterwards.

‘The main challenge was to arrange the right permits, reduce storage time, and move it across the border as quickly as possible,’ Lay Chean explains.

She helped coordinate the next steps, so the container could be moved by road to Malaysia and the situation could be brought back under control.

For the customer, the value was not only that the shipment reached the right destination. It was that the issue was handled before the cost and delay impact grew further.



‘If we do not follow up closely, the customer may face storage charges, delays, or extra costs. That is why we need to monitor every step and act early.’

That close follow-up is not always visible to the customer.

It sits in the document checks, permit questions, storage deadlines, follow-up with carriers and co-loaders, and the small actions that help prevent one issue from becoming a bigger one.

Each step may seem small on its own.

Together, they make a big difference to the final outcome.

Because ocean freight is about more than a container moving from one port to another. The cargo, documents, permits, schedules, storage windows, and local requirements all matter.

And when a shipment goes off course, the right next step starts with knowing which detail to act on first.

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